Establishment of a steel plant in Daitari in Orissa

1287. SHRI KAHNU CHARAN LENKA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a steel plant at Daitari in Orissa in the near future;

(b) whether any amount has been earmarked for this purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited, established at Daitari is functioning today; and

(e) if not, the reply to part (d) above be in the negative what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHANLAL FOTEDAR): (a) It was proposed to set up a steel plant at Daitari in Orissa several years ago. However, no firm investment decision could be taken because of constraint of financial resources. The matter is under examination afresh to see if a suitable investment could be undertaken keeping in view the situation.

(b) to (d) Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited was set up in 1982 for undertaking this project and this Company still exists. A provision of Rs. 45 lakhs has been made in the current year's budget for this Company.

(e) Does not arise.

Cooperation of private sector agencies and foreign companies for exploration of Minerals

1288. SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating to seek the cooperation of private sector agencies and the participation of foreign companies in the field of mineral exploration;

(b) if so, what are the minerals and areas where initiative and cooperation of private enterprises, including foreign participation, have been proposed to be sought;

(c) whether Government have already entered into any agreement with such private agencies and foreign companies for participation in the field of mineral exploration; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) to (d) Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd., a Public Sector Undertaking under the Department of Mines has entered into two agreements with Bureau De Recherches Geologiques Et Mineres (BRGM) which is a public body commissioned by the Government in France to carry out scientific research and public service. These agreements provide for technology transfer for evaluation of Tin-Tungsten and diamond prospects in India. The agreement on technology transfer for Tin-Tungsten was signed on 12th May, 1988 and the areas to be covered under this agreement are Tosham (Tin), Haryana; Bastar-Koraput (Tin), M.P. Orissa; Balda (Tungsten), Rajasthan; Kuchi-Khobna (Tungsten), Maharashtra; Burugubanda (Tungsten) Andhra Pradesh. The agreement on evaluation of diamond prospects in India was signed on 17th January, 1989 and the areas to be covered under this agreement are Krishna Gravels and Wairakarur in Andhra Pradesh and Panna in Madhya Pradesh. The technology transfer envisaged involves 'state of art' computer assisted data processing, beneficiation studies for upgradation of complex and low grade or marginal ores, evaluation, pre-feasibility studies etc. and does not include any direct participation in the field of mineral exploration as such in drilling, mining, etc.